



[Issue](#) | [Background](#) | [Findings](#) | [Conclusions](#) | [Recommendations](#) | [Responses](#) | [Attachments](#)

## Summary of High School and Community College Opportunities for Collaboration

### Issue

How can high school districts and the San Mateo Community College District work together to advance both vocational and academic opportunities for high school students?

### Summary

The community colleges are a significant part of the educational vitality of the county. They are designed to serve the 65% of high school students who are not likely to matriculate at a four-year university immediately following high school.

In its review, the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) found three areas of high school and community college collaboration that could be strengthened.

The first is vocational education. With the continuing decline in vocational courses at the high school level, the community colleges need to continue to expand the number and range of training programs offered in this area. The Grand Jury recommends that the College of San Mateo, Canada College, and Skyline College continue to expand and promote offerings of vocational training courses for students currently enrolled in local high schools.

The second is the innovative Middle College Program that both the College of San Mateo and Canada College offer to local high school students who do not fit the traditional model of completing high school before starting college. The Grand Jury recommends that this program be expanded to Skyline College, in cooperation with the Jefferson Union High School District and the South San Francisco Unified School District.

The third is the opportunity to offer college-level academic courses on a high school campus. This alleviates the problems of commute time and transportation and would allow an expansion of successful concurrent educational opportunities.



## High School and Community College Opportunities for Collaboration

### Issue

How can high school districts and the San Mateo Community College District work together to advance both vocational and academic opportunities for high school students?

### Background

The community college system in San Mateo County is an integral part of the California Master Plan for Higher Education. The Preamble to its mission statement declares that the Community College District is "committed to leadership by providing quality education and promoting life-long learning in partnership with its community and surrounding educational institutions." Community colleges are designed to serve the 65% of high school students who are not likely to matriculate at a four-year university immediately following high school.

The community colleges are vital to the economic engine of the county. The current economy requires post-secondary education for most jobs that pay a living wage. The community colleges provide much of the post-secondary training and education that is affordable for large numbers of students. Further, community colleges are able to respond quickly to workforce needs, as they have with recently developed programs in 3D-animation and video-game art.

There are several ways for students to further their goals for higher education while they are still in high school. These include:

- **Honors Programs**  
These are Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs in which high school students can earn college credit through coursework and examinations.
- **Concurrent Education**  
High school students in their junior and senior years can enroll in both high school and college simultaneously. Normally students move back and forth between campuses; however, in an experimental program Carlmont High School is offering community college programs at the high school site.

Concurrent education is an important element of high school reform that provides significant financial advantages for both families and the community. Students receive college credit while in high school and are, therefore, more likely to be successful at the university level. They have the advantage of transfer agreements to the University of California and to the California State University system. Students incur less debt in receiving their education.

- Vocational Training  
This is available at both the community college level and the high school level. For years vocational training has declined at the high school level where more and more focus is on academic study.
- Middle College  
This is a relatively new program in California. It is designed as a bridge for capable students who have become frustrated with completing high school but are not academically prepared for a four-year college.

## Investigation

The Grand Jury interviewed several high school district superintendents or their designated representatives as well as senior administrators of the San Mateo County community colleges. The goal of the interviews was twofold: to learn what vocational training and advanced academic education is currently offered to high school students and to determine how community colleges and high schools might collaborate to provide increased college opportunities for high school juniors and seniors.

## Findings

- Over the last 20 years high schools have dropped many vocational courses and are focusing more and more on college preparation. Students once served by these programs have been forced to defer their vocational training until they leave high school. This displaced demand has been picked up by community colleges that offer many vocational courses and have the capacity to develop new courses in rapid response to market demand. Among the types of courses offered are electrical and automotive technology; computer animation and electronic arts; early child development; English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); and courses in the health professions including nursing and radiology, respiratory therapy, and physical therapy.
- Middle College, an alternative program for high school juniors and seniors, currently serves 60 students from Sequoia Union High School District at Canada College and 60 students from San Mateo Union High School District and Cabrillo Unified School District in Half Moon Bay at the College of San Mateo. Students

take both required and elective classes on the college campus and receive college credit for their work. They have the option of graduating from their former high school with their class. Middle College appeals to students who have college interest and potential but who seek an alternative to the high school environment.

- Skyline College does not partner with the South San Francisco Unified School district or with the Jefferson Union High School District to provide a Middle College program for their students.
- Community colleges collect Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funds from the State by increasing their enrollment, while Basic Aid Districts<sup>1</sup> lose no funding if the colleges teach some of their students. Through working together, both enjoy a win-win situation
- The high schools contacted generally favored college level academic courses being offered at high school sites, as long as they do not interfere with the core courses traditionally offered by the high school.

## Conclusions

Given the diminishing number of vocational courses at the high school level, the community colleges are a valuable resource that can provide needed training for a significant segment of eleventh and twelfth grade students. Those students who are interested in working in a trade can begin to explore the options available and to accelerate their vocational training while they are still in high school.

As the College of San Mateo and Canada College have discovered, there is a significant number of high school students who do not fit the traditional progression model and are well served by the bridge provided by Middle College.

The time has come to consider expansion of concurrent education housed entirely on the high school campus. By alleviating the problems of commute time and transportation, more students could avail themselves of college-level academic courses

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<sup>1</sup> The California Constitution guarantees that each school district will receive a minimum amount of state aid called “basic aid.” Basic aid districts are those in which local property taxes exceed revenue limit entitlement.

## Recommendations

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. The Board of Trustees of the San Mateo County Community College District direct the College of San Mateo, Canada College, and Skyline College:
  - 1.1. To continue to expand and promote their offerings of vocational training courses for students concurrently enrolled in local high schools.
  - 1.2. To explore opportunities for offering college-level academic courses to be taught at high school sites.
  - 1.3. To work with Jefferson Union High School District and South San Francisco Unified School District to establish a Middle College Program in conjunction with Skyline Community College.
2. The Board of Trustees of the Jefferson Union High School District explore the feasibility of establishing a Middle College Program in conjunction with Skyline Community College.
3. The Board of Trustees of the South San Francisco Unified School District explore the feasibility of establishing a Middle College Program in conjunction with Skyline Community College.



## Jefferson Union High School District

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Superintendent

July 6, 2006

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, California 94063-1655

Dear Judge Hall:

I am writing in response to the High School and Community College Opportunities for Collaboration Report as requested by the 2005-06 Grand Jury:

#### **Issue:**

*How can high school districts and the San Mateo Community College District work together to advance both vocational and academic opportunities for high school students?*

While the Jefferson Union High School District agrees with the recommendation, the point needs to be continually made to the Grand Jury that the resources of "Revenue Limit" districts like the Jefferson Union High School District are considerably less than those of the "Basic Aid" districts of this County. A Grand Jury analysis of this disparity would be startling and enlightening.

The Jefferson Union High School District has had a strong relationship for many years with the San Mateo Community College District. We have several written and board approved agreements with Skyline College relating to current "2+2" programs in Business and Automotive Technology. These programs continue to serve many students. Additionally, plans have been made to host a number of community college taught courses on the Westmoor High School and Jefferson High School campuses beginning this fall. These classes include Mandarin, SAT Preparation and ELD Support Classes.

The Grand Jury Report also recommends that high school districts and Skyline College explore the feasibility of establishing a Middle College Program. During a recent meeting of the high school district and Skyline College (June 22), both entities

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall  
July 6, 2006  
Page 2

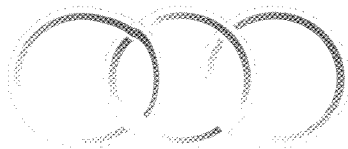
agreed to explore this possibility. It was, however, acknowledged that special funding that had allowed for such programs at Canada and College of San Mateo may no longer be available for program expansion. During the coming months the high school district and college will be scheduling a work group to examine the feasibility for our students.

These responses, I believe, address the recommendations of the Grand Jury. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 650-550-7969.

Sincerely,

**Michael J. Crilly**

Michael J. Crilly  
Superintendent



Cañada College, Redwood City  
College of San Mateo, San Mateo  
Skyline College, San Bruno

## SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Office of the Chancellor

August 17, 2006

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

### **AGENCY RESPONSE TO REPORT ON HIGH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION**

We have reviewed the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury's Report on the High School and Community College Opportunities for Collaboration and have the following responses to the recommendations presented in the report:

(From page 5 of the High School Report)

#### **The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Trustees of the San Mateo County Community College District:**

1.1. Continue to expand and promote their offerings of vocational training courses for students concurrently enrolled in local high schools. *The respondent agrees with this finding and will continue, through collaboration with District high schools as described in recommendation 1.2, to make these opportunities available to a wider variety of high-school aged students. The District's community colleges currently offer a wide assortment of vocational programs geared to direct entry into the workforce including the fields of nursing, law enforcement, fire science, bio-manufacturing and other high-demand occupations in the area. Many of these fields, especially in the allied health industry, require a student to complete extensive prerequisites prior to officially entering the program. Through the proposed collaborations outlined in recommendation 1.2, high school students could conceivably choose a vocational career path while still in high school and complete community college prerequisite courses on site as part of their daily high school schedule. This would give the student a head start on completing the core courses at the community college after graduation.*

1.2. Explore opportunities for offering college-level academic courses to be taught at high school sites. *The respondent agrees with this finding. In April 2005, the Board of Trustees held a study session on high school relationships. Superintendents from local districts, college presidents and District administration engaged Board members in*



*extensive discussion of various topics including the District's concurrent enrollment program. Through the existing concurrent enrollment programs, many students take a full load of high school courses during the day and pursue additional college courses at a nearby college in the evening. One of the suggestions emerging from the study session was to bring community college classes on site to the high schools. The Grand Jury report mentions the practical advantages of integrating community college courses into the high school schedule—reduction of commute and transportation time.*

*There are also other important economic and academic benefits. Presently, community colleges courses cost \$26 per unit. However, high school students who take classes under the concurrent enrollment program are exempt from these fees. Conceivably, a high school student could—at no charge other than the cost of textbooks—complete their first two years of college while still in high school at a considerable cost savings on tuition. Aside from the cost savings to students and their parents, the student could potentially gain an academic advantage, i.e. graduating from high school ready to transfer to a university with a “junior” status, or as noted in recommendation 1.1, completing prerequisites for a vocational course of study at the local community college.*

*The Respondent realizes that there is further work to be done in engaging administration and faculty in support of this initiative and is committed to that effort. Another Board study session is scheduled for September 11, 2006 to further engage the Board, administration, high school superintendents and faculty in seeking strategies to implement such a program.*

1.3. To work with Jefferson union High School District and South San Francisco Unified School District to establish a Middle College Program in conjunction with Skyline Community College. *The respondent appreciates that the Grand Jury recognizes the value of the Middle College High School programs at Cañada College and College of San Mateo. These programs offer an alternative to a population of students who otherwise have had difficulty achieving their full potential in a traditional high school setting. Though the respondent is fully in support of the middle college program, implementation at Skyline College requires further study to ensure that such a program at Skyline is in line with the College's educational master planning model and is economically feasible.*

Sincerely,

Dave Mandelkern  
President, Board of Trustees



**SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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**SUPERINTENDENT**  
Barbara Olds

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September 18, 2006

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Hall of Justice  
400 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Hall

Re: *High School and Community College Opportunities for Collaboration Report*

I am writing in response to the *High School and Community College Opportunities Report* that was sent to our Governing Board President dated June 12, 2006.

### **Finding**

- Over the last 20 years high schools have dropped many vocational courses and are focusing more and more on college preparation. Students once served by these programs have been forced to defer their vocational training until they leave high school. This displaced demand has been picked up by community colleges that offer many vocational courses and have the capacity to develop new courses in rapid response to market demand. Among the types of courses offered are electrical and automotive technology; computer animation and electronic arts; early child development; English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); and courses in the health professions including nursing and radiology, respiratory therapy, and physical therapy.

### **Response**

South San Francisco Unified School District has in place the following vocational courses at El Camino and South San Francisco High Schools:

Accounting I, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Computerized Keyboarding 1A, 1B  
Computerized Word Processing 1A, 1B  
Office Technology  
Virtual Business  
Web Page Design 1, 2  
Advanced Web Page Design  
Clothing 1, 2  
Advanced Clothing  
Foods 1, 2, 3

Independent Living A, B  
Interior Design 1, 2, 3, 4  
Auto Mechanics 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Vocational Auto Mechanics  
Electronics 1, 2  
Advanced Electronics  
Mechanical Drafting 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (If we can find a teacher)  
Photography 1, 2  
Advanced Photography  
Technology Lab 1, 2  
Advanced Technology Lab  
Woods 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Television/Video Broadcast Class

As our vocational teachers retire, it is almost impossible to replace the instructor. In fact, in order to retain programs, we have had to hire retired teachers so that these classes are not eliminated.

### **Finding**

- Middle College, an alternative program for high school juniors and seniors, currently serves 60 students from Sequoia Union High School District at Canada College and 60 students from San Mateo Union High School District and Cabrillo Unified School District in Half Moon Bay at the College of San Mateo. Students take both required and elective classes on the college campus and receive college credit for their work. They have the option of graduating from their former high school with their class. Middle College appeals to students who have college interest and potential but who seek an alternative to the high school environment.

### **Response**

- This program may benefit a certain type of student.

### **Finding**

- Skyline College does not partner with the South San Francisco Unified School District or with the Jefferson Union High School District to provide a Middle College program for their students.

### **Response**

- This finding is accurate.

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall  
September 18, 2006  
Page Three

### **Finding**

- Community colleges collect Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funds from the State by increasing their enrollment, while Basic Aid Districts lose no funding if the colleges teach some of their students.

### **Response**

- South San Francisco Unified School District is a Revenue Limit District. This finding does not apply.

### **Finding**

- The high schools contacted generally favored college level academic courses being offered at high school sites, as long as they do not interfere with the core courses traditionally offered by the high school.

### **Response**

- South San Francisco Unified School District is able to offer college level academic courses. We have an extensive Advanced Placement program.

### **Recommendation No. 3**

3. The Board of Trustees of the South San Francisco Unified School District explore the feasibility of establishing a Middle College Program in conjunction with Skyline Community College.

### **Response**

Revenue Limit Districts like South San Francisco Unified School District have considerably less resources than Basic Aid Districts; however, South San Francisco Unified School District has a strong relationship with the San Mateo County Community College District. We have several written and Board-approved 2 + 2 Agreements with Skyline, CSM, and Canada Colleges in Business, Auto Technology, Mechanical Drafting, and Clothing.

In order to implement a Middle College program, special funding would have to be available to implement such a program.

If there is any further information you need, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely



Barbara Olds  
Superintendent